THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The Government is aware that Pakistan has planned to develop and co-produce J-17 aircraft with the help of China for introduction in service.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Government keeps a close watch on the developments taking place in the region and takes appropriate measures for the security of the country.

Purchase of C-130 Transport Helicopters

1096. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is going to purchase C-130 Transport Helicopters from U.S.A.;

(b) if so, the details of such deals for the last three years, what is the present status of such deals and for how many crores of U.S. dollars contracts have been signed; and

(c) for how much amount of money India has signed agreements with other countries; the details thereof including their name and amount of contract signed with them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) A Letter of Request has been sent to the Government of USA regarding C-130 J aircraft. No contract for procurement has been signed.

Ill treatment of army personnel by officers

1097. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that army personnel are being humiliated and mistreated by their senior and superior officers, resulting in increase in suicidal cases;

(b) if so, the details of such cases including attempt to suicide in the last 5 years; and

(c) what steps the Ministry is taking to check this problem?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) The number of cases of suicide and attempted suicide in the Army during last 5 years are as follows:-

Year	Suicide cases	Attempted suicide
2002	80	10
2003	96	16
2004	100	14
2005	77	15
2006	120	34
2007 (upto 13.8.2007)	70	14

The causes of suicide in the Army include personal and family problems like marital discords, medical problems, depression, property related issues, perceived grievances etc.

2. The Government has taken a series of measures to check such incidents. Some of these measures are:-

(i) Better man management and prompt attendance of grievances at Unit level.

(ii) Improved accessibility of leaders and frequent interaction of junior leaders with the soldiers.

(iii) Strengthening time tested reporting and feedback system in the unit.

(iv) Junior Commissioned Officers and Non Commissioned Officers have been trained and deployed as psychological counsellors.

(v) The training capsules on relaxation techniques including Yoga and Pranayam have been introduced.

(vi) Leave policy has been liberalised permitting splitting of annual leave and casual leave. The troops will now be able to go to their home towns on leave thrice a year instead of twice a year earlier.

(vii) Rotation of units and individuals to minimize exposure to stress.

(viii) A helpline with toll free number has been established.

(ix) Arrangements have been made for identification and counselling of persons who are at higher combat stress by Regimental Medical Officers, Junior leaders and unit commanders.

(x) Counselling by religious teachers.

(xi) Psychological counselling by psychiatrists where required.

(xii) Grant of additional rail warrant to go home or Selected Place of Residence of family to all ranks of armed forces serving in field/counter insurgency/counter terrorist operational areas.

(xiii) Rationalisation of scheme for LTC for both officers and Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBORs) and removal of restriction of 1450 kms for availing All India LTC.

(xiv) Grant of High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) (HAUC) allowance at enhanced rates to troops deployed in more difficult, hazardous isolated areas within the existing HAUC areas.

(xv) All Chief Ministers have been requested to make the civil administration more responsive to the problems of serving soldiers and their families.

(xvi) It has been decided to strengthen Rajya Sainik Boards and Zilla Sainik Boards in all States to take necessary follow up action on the grievances of soldiers in their home towns/villages.

(xvii) Under the Married Accommodation Project, houses are being built at different Stations to improve the availability of family accommodation.